



Committee on Elections and Campaign Reform
Impartial Justice (AB 913)
March 31, 2010

Thank you, Chairman Smith and committee members, for holding this public hearing on the Impartial Justice trailer bill, Assembly Bill 913. Last November, we passed the Impartial Justice Bill (SB 40), which took a big step forward in restoring the integrity and impartiality to our state's highest court. Act 89 was signed into law by Governor Doyle on December 15, 2009.

The Impartial Justice Bill was a very complicated and intricate bill. Despite the diligent work of all parties involved, once the Government Accountability Board (GAB) began their implementation planning it came to light that there were some issues that need to be clarified through addition legislation. GAB will explain how these changes are necessary to bring us back to the initial intent of the bill and allow for a more streamlined implementation process.

AB 913 – what does it do?

Advances the effective to resolve unforeseen administrative complications:

- AB 913 advances the effective date from December 1, 2010, to May 1, 2010
- Advancing the effective date would resolve many administrative (GAB's) complications
- This addresses the administration of the Act's provisions and treatment of contributions raised in 2010, rather than have the law kick in only during the last portion of the campaign period.

Eliminates a Double Penalty:

- AB 913 eliminates a double penalty for exceeding the allowable seed money contribution and qualifying contribution limits
- This appears to have been a drafting error and was not part of the initial intent
- Unless we address this issue, Act 89 would require a participating candidate to transfer any excess contributions over those limits to the GAB and the public benefit would be reduced by the amount of the excess contributions.

Clarifies intent:

- AB 913 also clarifies that participating candidates cannot exceed either the seed money or the qualifying contribution limits, rather than the aggregate of those limits. The current language conflicts with other provisions in the bill
- AB 913 cleans up language regarding the disbursement limit for participating candidates, and the effective dates for the tax check off and appropriations and transfers the current balance in the justice account of the WECF to the new Democracy Trust Fund. With the current language of Act 89, there was a possibility that there would be no funds available until after the 2011 Supreme Court election.

I appreciate the work of GAB on this issue and their bringing these unforeseen issues to us while we still have the ability to address them this session. I also thank Senator Kreitlow for his continued work to ensure that we are able to implement this landmark legislation in time for the next election cycle.

Thank you for taking AB 913 up today and ask for your continued support and passage out of this committee.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gordon Hintz". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letter "G" being particularly large and stylized.

Gordon Hintz - 54th Assembly District